

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 1

SAINT ANDREW'S CROSS

- 1 Saint Andrew's Cross, which has a population of seven, is South Australia's smallest town. Tim Stiller stayed at the town's only hotel, on his way to Alice Springs.
- 2 There isn't much to see at Saint Andrew's Cross. The town is 200 kilometres from civilisation, and on the edge of Stuart Desert, one of the driest, hottest deserts in the world. It has a small hotel, a service station and a car park (which is also an airport). There aren't any shops or billboards, and there aren't any neon lights. But strangely enough, there are lots of tourists. In fact, Saint Andrew's Cross is so popular that over 150 people stop at the hotel every day. Why? Because it's the last stop for travellers before they get to Alice Springs. It's also the only place for workers from the nearby Anna Creek Station, the largest cattle station in the world.
- 3 Saint Andrew's Cross Hotel was originally built in 1883 for cattle station workers and camel train drivers. Today most visitors are backpackers. In the hotel lobby, there is a huge guest book with signatures from London, Berlin, and even Mexico City. Inside the bar, the walls are covered with business cards, colourful bank notes, and postcards. Many travellers leave something after their one-night stay.
- 4 'My friends in Melbourne think it's a lonely place,' says Craig Campbell, who works behind the bar, 'but the opposite is true. The hotel is always lively, and each traveller has a tale to tell.' Even so, the desert is a dangerous place. There are scorpions and poisonous snakes, and temperatures often rise to 49°C.
- 5 Isn't Saint Andrew's Cross the last town you would want to live in? Craig doesn't think so. 'Some people think the outback is just sand and bush, but it really is a wonderful country. If you want to experience the real Australia, come to Saint Andrew's Cross.'

Part 1

Read the text and decide whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. The first one has been done for you as an example.

	TRUE	FALSE
0. Saint Andrew's Cross has a big population.		✓
1. The nearest town to Saint Andrew's Cross is 200 Km.		
2. You can fly to Saint Andrew's Cross.		
3. Only tourists visit the hotel.		
4. People stay at the hotel for a long time.		
5. Craig Campbell says he sometimes feels lonely.		
6. He doesn't like Saint Andrew's Cross.		

Part 2

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

Paragraph 1

0. The number of people who live in a place.

Paragraph 2

1. More than.
2. Arrive.
3. Not far away.

Paragraph 3

4. People travelling in an informal way.
5. Very big.
6. Period of time you spend in a place.

Paragraph 4

7. Every.
8. Story.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
population								

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 2

Torquay? But I said Turkey!

Kumiko Tsuchida is a Japanese professor and she works in Turkey at Istanbul University. Last week she took a short holiday in London. She had a good time, and after a few days she packed her suitcase, checked out of the hotel, and set off to catch her flight back to Istanbul.

At Paddington station she couldn't find the train to the airport, so she asked a railway guard. Mrs Tsuchida doesn't speak very much English, and when she said 'Turkey', the guard thought that she said 'Torquay', a seaside town in south-west England. So he directed her to the platform for the 8.15 train to Torquay.

Mrs Tsuchida got on the train and found a seat. The journey seemed very long, but when she asked the other passengers 'Turkey?' they all said that yes, she was on the right train for Torquay.

She arrived in the seaside town just after midnight, but when she got off the train, of course, she didn't recognize anything. She didn't know where she was. She didn't have any English money and she was very frightened.

Two hours later, the police found her. They provided a bed for her for the night and the next morning they phoned the Japanese embassy. The embassy sorted out the problem. Then Mrs Tsuchida got the train back to London, took a taxi to Heathrow airport, and caught another flight to Istanbul.

Before she left, she spoke to our reporter through an interpreter. 'I said "Turkey, Turkey", but people didn't understand my pronunciation and they thought I said "Torquay". But I enjoyed my visit and English people are very helpful and kind.'

Part 1

Read the story again. Number these events in the correct order. There is an example done for you.

- ☐ She travelled to Heathrow airport.
- ☐ She caught a flight to Istanbul.
- ☐ She got on the train.
- ☐ She went to Paddington station.
- ☐ The police found her.
- ☐ A railway guard directed her to the Torquay train.
- ☐ She spoke to a reporter.
- ☐ The police phoned the Japanese embassy.
- ☐ She spent a few days in London.
- ☒ 1 She left Turkey.
- ☐ She arrived in Torquay.

Part 2

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0. University teacher (paragraph 1).
1. Paid the bill and left (paragraph 1).
2. Showed the way (paragraph 2).
3. Gave the impression (paragraph 3).
4. Afraid (paragraph 4).
5. Gave (paragraph 5).

0	1	2	3	4	5
professor					

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 3

Are you getting enough sleep?

Six months ago, Caroline Davis felt irritable. She couldn't concentrate at work and the quality of her work was beginning to suffer. She knew she wasn't getting enough sleep so she decided to see a sleep therapist. Here's her account of the experience:

'I work in the travel industry and have a very stressful job. Six months ago, I had terrible habits. I often worked until midnight, drove home, had something unhealthy to eat, usually fast food, and went to bed. Then the next day, I usually got up at five or six in the morning. I decided things had to change so I went to see a sleep therapist.

The therapist told me that I needed to have at least seven or eight hours sleep every night and I needed to establish a regular timetable. This meant I had to go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time – even at weekends. I decided to go to bed at eleven every night and get up at seven.

At first I had trouble getting to sleep so my sleep therapist gave me a few ideas. I often went to the gym late in the evening. However, she told me that this was a bad idea because exercise raises your body temperature and makes you more alert. So I started going for a walk or swimming at lunchtime instead.

My therapist also suggested that I should create the right atmosphere in my room for sleeping. Bright light tells the brain that it's time to wake up so I bought some new, heavier curtains and made sure my room was nice and dark. My therapist also told me not to fill my brain with too many thoughts last thing at night. I like reading thrillers and ghost stories but I put them away and listened to relaxing music instead!

I noticed a change after about a week. I was less stressed during the day and I could concentrate for longer. The result was that I did more work and it was better quality too. These days, I try to stick to my sleeping schedule. However, it doesn't always work. I sometimes go to bed after midnight at the weekend and I occasionally watch the odd scary movie!'

Part 1

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0. Sufficient (title).
1. Angry (paragraph 1).
2. Plan (paragraph 3).
3. Recommended (paragraph 5).
4. At twelve o'clock at night (paragraph 6).

0	1	2	3	4
enough				

Part 2

For questions 1 -6 choose the correct answer A, B, or C. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0 Caroline went to see a therapist because her moods were affecting her ...

- A social life.
- B work.**
- C health.

1 Caroline usually went to bed straight after

- A work.
- B travelling.
- C eating.

2 The therapist advised Caroline to ...

- A go to bed at a regular time.
- B get up earlier.
- C go to bed earlier.

3 Caroline decided to ...

- A stop doing exercise.
- B do more exercise.
- C exercise at a different time.

4 The therapist told Caroline to make ...

- A her room brighter.
- B her room darker.
- C no changes to her room.

5 Caroline decided to ...

- A listen to music instead of reading in bed.
- B read more relaxing novels.
- C listen to stories in bed.

6 She started to ...

- A work longer hours.
- B produce better work.
- C see her therapist more often.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
B						

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 4

Brighton Break

0. Brighton is one of the most vibrant, colourful and creative cities in England. It's situated on the South Coast and has something for everyone. It's cosmopolitan and easy to get around with some great attractions and a lively nightlife. Here are the top six places to visit.

1. Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. This building was re-opened in 2002 and houses historic art collections, as well as extensive historical information about the city. Entrance is free. Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 2pm to 5pm.

2. Brighton Pier. The arcades, fairground rides, ice-cream stands, and snack bars are perfect for a day out with the kids. Don't miss the rollercoaster at the end of the pier – that is, if you don't mind looking straight down at the sea! Open from 10am.

3. Montpelier Hall. This beautiful, old hotel was constructed in 1846 for Henry Smithers, the sixth Mayor of Brighton. It has 22 comfortable rooms and a lovely garden. Only five minutes walk from the main shopping area and the Pier, it's ideally situated for afternoon tea or a weekend stay.

4. Brighton Rock Beach House. Many local people come here to relax and enjoy the delicious food and excellent cocktails in this café-bar. It's open Monday to Saturday 11am to 11pm. Call 8673456 to reserve a table as it can get busy on Saturday evenings.

5. Churchill Square Shopping Centre. You can buy anything you want in this large shopping mall with famous names like Hennes, HMV, and the Disney Store. There is even a crèche for small children if you prefer to go shopping without the whole family!

6. Brighton Race Course. Enjoy some first-class horse racing with panoramic views of the sea. There are eighteen race meetings between April and October. Tickets cost between £13 and £18, with a £2 discount if you reserve in advance.

Part 1

Match the sentences A–H with paragraphs 1–6. There is one sentence you don't need to use. 0 is an example.

A	It's a good place to visit with all the family.	
B	It's got a lot of information about how Brighton used to be.	
C	It's an exciting and artistic place.	0
D	It's very big and has a lot of variety.	
E	It isn't open all day.	
F	It costs less if you buy your tickets before you visit.	
G	It's very near the centre of the city.	
H	It's a good idea to phone in advance because it's popular.	

Part 2

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0. You can see people from all over the world (paragraph 0).
1. You don't have to pay (paragraph 1).
2. To book (paragraph 4).
3. Shopping centre (paragraph 5).

0	1	2	3
cosmopolitan			

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 5

THE T-SHIRT IS HERE TO STAY

It's hard to think of life without T-shirts. But the word T-shirt only became a word in the English dictionary in the 1920s, and the style only became popular in the 1960s.

In the Second World War, American soldiers wore wool uniforms, and they were very hot and uncomfortable in the European summers. The American soldiers saw that European soldiers weren't hot because they wore a light cotton vest under their shirt. After that, all the soldiers in the American army started wearing cotton vests.

So men wore T-shirts under their shirts; T-shirts were underwear. Then in the 1950s, three American film stars (John Wayne, Marlon Brando and James Dean) surprised everyone by wearing their "underwear" in films.

In the 1960s, it became easier to put words and pictures on T-shirt. By The late 60s rock and roll bands and sports teams started to make big money selling T-shirts with their logos and team names on them.

After that, T-shirts became popular not just in the USA, but all over the world. People wear T-shirts to express themselves with words and slogans and because they are comfortable, cheap and can be fun. T-shirts will be popular for a long, long time.

Part 1

Read the text and decide whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. The first one has been done for you as an example.

0. T-shirts became popular in the 1920s
1. American soldiers brought T-shirts to Europe.
2. For many years T-shirts were underwear.
3. American movie stars surprised people when they took their T-shirts off.
4. Putting pictures on T-shirts started in the 1980s.
5. T-shirts are popular all over the world.

TRUE	FALSE
	✓

Part 2

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0. Special clothes that people wear for a job or school (paragraph 2).
1. Started to be something (paragraph 1).
2. Not heavy, good in hot weather (paragraph 2).
3. A piece of underwear that people (often men) wear under a shirt or top (paragraph 2).
4. Appreciated, liked by people in general (paragraph 5).
5. To show your feelings, your ideas or personality (paragraph 5).

0	1	2	3	4	5
uniforms					

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE. EXERCISE 6

Getting around the UK

By bus and coach

In the UK, long-distance express buses are called coaches. These are always economical, but they can be very slow. The biggest company is National Express, which has frequent services between big cities. They're usually cheaper if you buy your ticket early and travel at quiet times. In many towns, there are separate bus and coach stations, so passengers need to make sure they go to the right place to get their coach.

By car

Car travel in the UK is expensive, and there is often a lot of traffic. However, travelling by car means that you can be independent and flexible, and a car carrying three or more passengers can be cheaper than public transport. Motorways take drivers quickly from one city to the next, but small roads are often more scenic and fun. Parking in the centre of big cities can be difficult and very expensive, so an alternative is to use a Park&Ride. This is a system where drivers pay less to park their cars outside the city and take a bus to the centre.

By train

Trains are generally faster and more comfortable than coaches for long-distance travel, but they can be a lot more expensive. About 20 different companies operate train services in the UK, so the system can be quite confusing. However, passengers can get information on timetables and fares from the National Rail Enquires website, which also has a way to buy tickets. There are two types of tickets: first and standard, and tickets are much cheaper if you buy them early.

Part 1

Read the text and decide whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. The first one has been done for you as an example.

	TRUE	FALSE
0. Coaches are long distance buses in the UK.	✓	
1. Taking a coach is a slow way to travel.		
2. Bus and coach stations are always together.		
3. Using public transport is cheaper for three or four people than a car.		
4. Long-distance journeys are quicker by train.		
5. You can buy tickets on line from National Rail Enquires.		

Part 2

Find words in the text which correspond to these definitions. The first one has been done for you as an example. Write your answers in the boxes provided.

0. Quite cheap (paragraph 1).
1. Happening often (paragraph 1).
2. Not rigid, adaptable (paragraph 2).
3. Beautiful (paragraph 2).
4. Not clear to understand (paragraph 3).
5. Prices (paragraph 3).

0	1	2	3	4	5
economical					